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Letter dated 20 December 2012 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

India held the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November 2012. An assessment of the work of the Council, prepared under my supervision in consultation with the other members of the Council, is enclosed (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) H. S. **Puri**

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Annex to the letter dated 20 December 2012 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of India (November 2012)

Introduction

1. During November 2012, under the presidency of the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Ambassador H. S. Puri, the Security Council held 21 informal consultations of the whole and 24 official meetings, one of which was held in private.

2. During the month, the Council adopted six resolutions (two each on Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and one each on the Sudan/South Sudan (Abyei) and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and two presidential statements (on piracy and Sierra Leone), and issued two press statements (on the Middle East and the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

3. The Council also adopted the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/67/2 (Supp.)) on 8 November, which the President of the Council submitted to the General Assembly on 15 November.

Africa

South Sudan

4. On 28 November, the Security Council was briefed by Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). He said that while the South Sudan Government had made progress, including moving forward in establishing the national Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Council and announcing the development of a national human rights agenda, the failure to resolve security, economic and political problems continued to have a direct impact on the country's fragile stability and security. While tensions between South Sudan and the Sudan had decreased, if the agreements signed on 27 September were not rapidly implemented, economic development in South Sudan would be hit hard, particularly the oil sector. The current economic fragility had also been hampered by inter-communal conflicts and militia clashes and threats against the South Sudanese army (Sudan People's Liberation Army) and UNMISS, as well as a growing concern over politically motivated threats and abductions targeting journalists, civil society activists and political opponents. The Under-Secretary-General added that scant progress had been achieved on a range of issues, including talks between the countries and the processes of establishing national institutions alongside reconciliation and civilian disarmament initiatives in Jonglei State. He noted that resource constraints have been impediments to capacity development in the police service, which is a critical objective requiring sustained attention and investment. He also expressed concern at the expulsion of an UNMISS senior human rights officer on 23 October. Calling the act a violation of the status-of-forces agreement,

he called on the Government of South Sudan to rescind the order, and suggested that the Security Council call for the same.

5. The representative of South Sudan, Francis Mading Deng, reported his Government's actions to promote stability and inter-communal harmony in Jonglei State. He said that while his country took the concern of the Under-Secretary-General seriously and affirmed its unwavering commitment to international human rights and humanitarian standards, it believed that it had acted consistently with the status-of-forces agreement when expelling the UNMISS officer concerned. He also thanked the Council and UNMISS for their attention to outstanding issues. He reiterated the commitment of his country to peaceful coexistence with the Sudan, and asked the Security Council to support unreservedly the decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council concerning the Sudan and South Sudan. He commented that border security between the two countries is connected to stability in the Two Areas (Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States), and, quoting the report of the Secretary-General, made note of the impact on South Sudan of the humanitarian crisis in the Two Areas. He affirmed the importance of Abyei to sustainable peace in the region, welcoming some positive developments in discussions with the Sudan.

6. In informal consultations following the briefing, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS, Hilde Johnson, said that the Mission faced severe resource constraints, particularly with regard to aviation capability. Council members commended UNMISS peacekeepers and leadership for their work despite resource constraints. They criticized the Government of South Sudan for expelling the UNMISS human rights officer.

Sudan and South Sudan

7. On 14 November, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, on the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012). He informed the Council that the African Union Peace and Security Council had given a period of six weeks for the Sudan and South Sudan to reach agreement on the final status of the Abyei area and also decided that in the event the parties fail to do so, the African Union Peace and Security Council would endorse the proposal of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on the status of Abyei of 21 September 2012 as final and binding, and would seek its endorsement by the United Nations Security Council. The African Union Peace and Security Council also encouraged the parties to ensure the implementation of the agreements signed under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on 27 September in Addis Ababa. The Special Envoy expressed concern at the ongoing hostilities in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States and the failure of the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)-North to hold direct bilateral talks on cessation of hostilities and political settlement of the conflict thus enabling the implementation of the proposal of the tripartite mechanism for delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Two Areas.

8. While welcoming the ratification of the nine agreements signed on 27 September 2012, Council members regretted that the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-North had failed to start direct talks or to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Two Areas. With respect to the final status of Abyei,

some Council members expressed the opinion that the proposal of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel of 21 September 2012, which was developed at the request of the Presidents of the Sudan and South Sudan and was based on the mutual commitments of the two parties contained in the Abyei Protocol to the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 20 June 2011 agreement between the two parties, and which protected the rights of and promoted economic development for both the Dinka and Misseriya communities, was the best way forward. Others stated their belief that the final status of Abyei and disputed and claimed border areas are territorial disputes between the Sudan and South Sudan and should be resolved only through negotiated and mutually acceptable solutions between the parties. Given the sensitive and complicated nature of the issues, the international community should adopt an objective, impartial and balanced approach. All members hoped that the parties would utilize the six-week period to mutually agree on the pending issues.

9. On 16 November, the Council adopted resolution 2075 (2012) to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) until 31 May 2013.

10. On 28 November, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan briefed the Council in informal consultations on the status of the implementation of resolution 2046 (2012). He said that there had been no significant progress towards the implementation of the nine agreements signed between the Sudan and South Sudan on 27 September. The parties had not held any talks so far on the final status of Abyei during the six-week period. Meanwhile, hostilities had continued between the Sudanese Armed Forces and SPLM-North in the Two Areas and the humanitarian situation had been deteriorating.

11. Council members reiterated their support for the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and hoped that the parties would utilize the six-week period to agree on mutually acceptable solutions to the outstanding issues, while taking steps towards the implementation of the agreements signed on 27 September, particularly those concerning the security issues and the resumption of oil production and exports.

Libya

12. On 7 November, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, submitted her fourth report on the implementation of the resolution 1970 (2011). She stated that Libya faced a multitude of security challenges, and that as the country continued on its path towards stability, it would need strong support from the international community to ensure that perpetrators of crimes committed during the 2011 conflict that led to Gaddafi's downfall were brought to justice. Outlining the cases against Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, and Abdullah al-Senussi, a senior Libyan intelligence official, she said that both Mr. Gaddafi and Mr. Al-Senussi had already been detained, and the Libyan authorities had challenged the admissibility of the case against the former and possibly of the latter. The Pre-trial Chamber was in the process of deciding on the merits of the challenge as to whether the case should be heard at the Hague-based facilities of the Court or in Libya. She encouraged the Libyan Government to ensure that there was no amnesty for international crimes and no impunity for crimes. She also called on the Government to redouble its commitment to working with the Court, as well as its active engagement with the judicial process.

13. Council members called for supporting Libya at this critical juncture. Several Council members also raised concerns on the detention of four Court officials by militia forces in June. Concern was expressed that the authorities were unable to bring armed groups under control. Many Council members stressed the need to carry out trials according to international standards and to ensure that justice was done in a comprehensive manner.

14. The Libyan representative informed that his Government had put in place a global strategy for the promotion of national reconciliation and the end of impunity. However, he acknowledged, the strategy faced numerous challenges, including the delay of the formation of the new Government. He reiterated his country's pledge to carry out all procedures in compliance with international law and sought support from other countries where the accused were hiding to take the investigations forward to their logical conclusion.

15. On 8 November, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Tarek Mitri, and the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal. The Special Representative said that the formation of the new Government in Libya on 31 October was a milestone in the democratic development of Libya. He gave details of the activities of UNSMIL to support the Libyan authorities, including in the areas of security sector reforms, sharing of best practices, training and national reconciliation. With respect to the situation in Bani Walid, the Special Representative said that the displaced were returning, and the Libyan General National Congress had set up a fact-finding committee to look into human rights violations. He added that the security situation in Libya remained precarious, with bouts of fighting between armed groups and assassination attempts on security officials and religious leaders. There had been widespread denunciation of the attacks on the United States Consulate in Benghazi that had resulted in the deaths of Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other United States diplomatic personnel. Little progress had been made in transferring detention facilities from armed brigades to the Ministry of Justice.

16. The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya announced that the Panel of Experts had been investigating the reported cases of violations of arms embargo. The Committee would further consider the recommendations of the Panel.

17. Council members welcomed the elections to the General National Congress and the formation of a new Government. Members unanimously called on the Libyan authorities to address the need to demobilize and reintegrate armed brigades and the threat posed by terrorist and extremist groups. They advised UNSMIL to play the role of a constructive partner and proactive guide. They called for UNSMIL to effectively coordinate international assistance. Some members expressed concern at the proliferation of arms to Libya's neighbours and beyond, and called for strict enforcement of arms embargo and decisive steps to deal with the problem. Members also advised the 1970 Committee to take violations of the arms embargo seriously and take appropriate action on the recommendations of the Panel of Experts.

18. In his concluding remarks, the Special Representative said that there was an intrinsic link between the constitution-making process and national dialogue and

reconciliation. Libya had to define a new social contract, which should go hand in hand with the healing of decades-old wounds.

Somalia

19. On 7 November, the Council adopted resolution 2073 (2012) to extend the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for four months.

20. On 8 November, the President of the Security Council, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, submitted the 120-day report of the Committee to the Security Council. The members welcomed the end of the transition period in Somalia and called for the consideration of appropriate adjustments in the sanctions regime, in consultation with the new Somali authorities. Members also called on Eritrea to cooperate with the Monitoring Group.

21. On 21 November, the Council adopted resolution 2077 (2012) to extend the authorization for counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

22. On 20 November, the Council adopted resolution 2076 (2012) which, inter alia, condemned the resumption of attacks by the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), demanded its immediate withdrawal and the restoration of State authority in Goma and North Kivu, requested the Secretary-General to report on the allegations of external support to M23 and also on options and their implications for the possible redeployment, in consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries, with regard to the contingents of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and additional force multipliers, observation capabilities and troops within the current authorized ceiling, which, in regard to the current crisis, could improve the ability of MONUSCO to implement its mandate, including to protect civilians and report on flows of arms and related materiel across the borders of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

23. On 21 November, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MONUSCO, Roger Meece, on the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He said that most worrisome was the M23 rebellion, its new offensive operations, its occupation of Goma and North Kivu and, most of all, its appearance as a strong, disciplined, established military force with sophisticated weapons and tactics. In consultations of the whole following the briefing, it was mentioned that M23 was equipped with heavy weapons and sophisticated equipment, including night-vision equipment. Neither MONUSCO nor the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo had access to night-vision equipment.

24. In consultations of the whole, the Council was also briefed by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev. The briefing covered, inter alia, the final report of the Group of Experts and its recommendations.

25. Council members demanded that all external support to M23 must cease immediately, and that M23 must withdraw from Goma and other areas. They also

supported the mediation efforts of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and called for the full involvement of the United Nations in the process. While supporting the actions of MONUSCO to fully implement its mandate, some members advised that any change in its mandate should be made in consultations with the troop-contributing countries and matched by the provision of adequate resources.

26. On 27 November, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Susana Malcorra. The latter informed the Council members about her visit to the region and meetings with the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. During the visit, she also went to Goma and met, at the request of President Kabila, with M23 leader Sultani Makenga. She said that President Kabila was in a terrified state following the successes scored by M23 against the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo. Due to the threat of M23 continuing its offensive, President Kabila agreed to several measures in meetings with his Rwandan and Ugandan counterparts on 24 November, in order to defuse the crisis. The implementation of those measures would need to be discussed further.

27. Council members expressed serious concern about the developments, and said that political negotiations were required in order to stabilize the situation. Some members said that it had to be kept in mind that the M23 leaders were war criminals and their military victory could not be legitimized. All members supported the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and called for short-, medium- and long-term responses to the chronic instability and insecurity in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some members supported the proposal that the Secretary-General designate a Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region to allow high-level and continuous United Nations engagement with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and other States of the region.

28. On 28 November, the Council adopted resolution 2078 (2012) to extend the arms embargo against armed groups, the targeted measures against listed individuals and entities, and the mandate for the Group of Experts until 1 February 2014.

Western Sahara

29. On 28 November, the Security Council was briefed by the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Head of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber. The Personal Envoy said that during his recent visit to the region, all interlocutors confirmed their commitment to working with the United Nations to pursue a political solution for the final status of Western Sahara, while at the same time reiterating their attachment to their own proposals. Under the circumstances, after four rounds of official negotiations and nine rounds of informal talks, it was futile to convene more meetings of the parties any time soon in the absence of a change in the equation. He asked Council members and the wider international community to encourage the parties to enter into serious negotiations to bring the conflict to an end since it would be a serious miscalculation to leave it to fester.

30. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the situation in Western Sahara during the reporting period had remained stable, and the ability of MINURSO to report on the situation, though limited, had improved. Neither party

had so far denied access to MINURSO, even though they had different interpretations of the mandate of the Mission.

31. The Council members expressed appreciation for the efforts of Morocco to improve the living conditions of Saharawi people and expressed unqualified support for MINURSO and the Personal Envoy. One member called for human rights reporting by MINURSO, while others felt no need for such a mandate and praised the work being done by Morocco's national human rights institutions in Western Sahara. Some members said that Morocco's autonomy plan could form the serious and credible basis for resolving the Western Sahara issue, and others supported a mutually acceptable political solution.

Sierra Leone

32. On 28 November, the Security Council was briefed by the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, on the 17 November elections in Sierra Leone. He said that the elections were held in a festive atmosphere with large participation by women and youth. International observers had concluded that the elections were peaceful, credible and transparent. Even though there were complaints by the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party, the situation across the country was calm except in some areas of opposition stronghold. UNIPSIL was working closely with all stakeholders to facilitate dialogue to resolve their differences. He added that the United Nations technical assessment mission would visit Sierra Leone shortly to review the situation and make recommendations with respect to the transition, drawdown and exit strategy of the Mission.

33. In the ensuing discussion, Council members welcomed the peaceful conduct of elections, which had ushered Sierra Leone into a new phase of peace consolidation.

34. On 30 November, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/25) that, inter alia, commended Sierra Leone for the conduct and successful conclusion of presidential, parliamentary, district and local elections. It called upon all political parties and candidates to accept the results and to work with the Government in a constructive manner through national dialogue and reconciliation, and urged all parties to resolve any grievances peacefully through the appropriate legal means in accordance with the national laws of Sierra Leone. The Council recalled its request in resolution 2065 (2012) for the Secretary-General to deploy an inter-agency technical assessment mission to Sierra Leone, and in particular for the mission to consider detailed proposals and a recommended timeline for the transition, drawdown and exit strategy for UNIPSIL by no later than 15 February 2013.

Middle East

Middle East, including the Palestinian question

35. Between 14 and 21 November, the Security Council held a number of meetings, including one private meeting on 14 November and a briefing by the Secretary-General on 21 November, in order to discuss the crisis in the Gaza Strip and Israel. All Council members supported the cessation of hostilities. Some

members said that Israel was exercising its right to self-defence in the face of rocket attacks from Gaza. Others criticized the disproportionate use of force by Israel. The Council's consideration of the crisis ended with a press statement on 21 November, in which the members of the Council welcomed the ceasefire agreement in order to bring about a sustainable and durable cessation of hostilities that had been affecting the Gaza Strip and Israel. They called on the parties to uphold the agreement and to act seriously to implement its provisions in good faith. While reaffirming the need for the people of Israel and the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip to live without fear, the members called on the international community to contribute to improving the living conditions of the people in the Gaza Strip, notably through providing additional emergency aid through appropriate established channels. They also stressed the urgency of the restoration of calm in full and reiterated the importance of achieving a comprehensive peace based on the vision of a region where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders.

36. On 27 November, the Council held the monthly briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, said that the recent developments — the recent disturbing cycle of violence in Gaza and Israel and a dangerous escalation that had concluded with the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire agreement on 21 November, and the Palestinians' intention to approach the General Assembly to seek the status of non-member observer State — underscore that the status quo is unsustainable and that it is all the more vital to identify a way ahead to urgently put the peace process back on track. The Special Coordinator reiterated his warning about the risks of prolonged stalemate in the peace process for the two-State solution and the viability of the Palestinian Authority. Unfortunately, the effort to revive the peace process continued to be undermined by actions on the ground, including continued settlement activity, settler violence and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces.

37. With respect to the Syrian Arab Republic, the Special Coordinator noted that as a consequence of the 21-month internal conflict, the situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) remained volatile, and armed clashes between the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and armed members of the opposition took place daily inside the area of separation. He added that the situation in Lebanon also remained vulnerable to the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

38. Underscoring their support for the two-State solution, Council members talked of their efforts for the resumption of direct talks. They also emphasized that all concerned should fully respect the political independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Divergent views were expressed on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Syrian Arab Republic

39. On 6 November, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic in the aftermath of the appeal of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, for a truce during the Eid al-Adha holidays, from 26 to 29 October. The Under-Secretary-General said that the

appeal was aimed at giving breathing space to the parties and was based on the principle that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, as the stronger party, should take the initiative and that other parties should reciprocate. The truce was short-lived, and since it was based on the principle of a unilateral cessation of fire, not a negotiated ceasefire with mutual obligations and commitments, the question of who violated the truce first was not the key question. The main issue was that, in spite of the interest expressed on both sides in silencing guns, and the fatigue of fighting such interest might have demonstrated, the parties remained locked in their fear, mistrust and military logic. As at 30 October, the level of violence was the same as it had been before the Eid al-Adha holiday period. Gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian law continued by both parties and the humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate.

40. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs added that the UNDOF-supervised area of separation between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Israeli-occupied Golan had also become part of the battleground. The fighting had curtailed UNDOF operations and potentially risked a dangerous breach of the ceasefire established by the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement between the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel.

41. He said that the tragic situation in the Syrian Arab Republic would not be resolved militarily. The logic of war must be abandoned for the search of a just, democratic and sustainable political solution. The Joint Special Representative was continuing his intensive consultations to that end. The Security Council had eminent responsibilities and an essential role to play in making the parties change their course through strong and unambiguous support for the efforts of the Joint Special Representative.

42. In their statements, all Council members expressed support for the efforts of the Joint Special Representative. Some members said that the violence perpetrated by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was to blame for the current situation and it was difficult to see how the conflict could be resolved with President Bashar al-Assad in power. They called on the Council to adopt a binding resolution with consequences for non-compliance so that the call for political transition in the Geneva communiqué of 30 June would be implemented. On the other hand, some members said that the policy of regime change had to be abandoned and all Syrian parties pressured to engage in a Syrian-led political process for the resolution of the crisis. Some members regretted that the Council had not been able to adopt statements condemning terrorist acts in the Syrian Arab Republic. Others said that it would not be right to condemn acts attributable to the opposition groups while the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was engaged in killing civilians through the use of heavy weapons and aerial assets.

43. On 29 November, the Joint Special Representative briefed the Council in informal consultations on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. His briefing covered three issues: the humanitarian situation, political and military developments, and the way forward. He said that there were 2 million internally displaced persons and 4 million in desperate need of help. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic now recognized the problem and its cooperation with the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross had improved. On the military front, the opposition had achieved its objective of relieving the pressure on their fighters in the north and the west of the country. They had now grown bolder and

had started attacking the capital, Damascus. The Government, on its part, remained confident that the security forces would have the upper hand. Turkey, Lebanon and the Occupied Golan Heights had been affected by the Syrian crisis, and threats to regional peace and stability were, therefore, neither abstract nor something in the distant future.

44. The Joint Special Representative added that at the political level, a major achievement had been the creation of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, which had reaffirmed the almost unanimous demand of many opposition groups that President Assad and his close associates leave power before any political settlement could be contemplated. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, on the other hand, continued to see itself as the legitimate authority and claimed that it was facing mostly armed terrorist groups funded by a vast regional and international anti-Syria conspiracy.

45. Under these circumstances, the Joint Special Representative said, the Syrian Arab Republic needed a political process that would lead to the creation of a new Syria, with a new political dispensation. Otherwise, it would become a new and more terrible Somalia. The building blocks for a political process to end the Syrian crisis already existed in the final communiqué of the Action Group for Syria, issued in Geneva on 30 June. This should include a transitional governing body with full executive powers at the beginning of the political process and an election at the end of it. For the final communiqué to be effective, he added, its substantive parts needed to be translated into a Security Council resolution. The process must include a binding agreement on the cessation of all forms of violence. Since there was no trust between the Syrian parties, a well-planned observation system must be put in place for the fighting to stop. This could be organized through a large, robust peacekeeping force established through a Security Council resolution.

46. In the ensuing discussion, some Council members reiterated their views that President Assad could not be part of the solution, that the Council must adopt a Chapter VII resolution with consequences for non-compliance, and that they would continue to work with the newly created National Coalition to expand its presence on the ground. Other Members opposed a Chapter VII resolution and criticized the National Coalition for rejecting political dialogue until President Assad left power.

Lebanon

47. On 9 November, the Council was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), Terje Roed Larsen. He said that diligent and patient work with the relevant parties had led to the implementation of several of the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004), such as presidential and parliamentary elections; the withdrawal of Syrian troops and military assets from Lebanon; and the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. He noted that the main remaining provisions of the resolution to be implemented, which seriously challenged the stability and political independence of Lebanon, were the disarming and disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. The Special Envoy added that over the reporting period, there had been yet again no tangible progress in the disbanding and disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias in Lebanon.

48. Council members expressed concern at the lack of full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004), and also at the threat to peace and stability in Lebanon

owing to the ongoing crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. They called for increased vigilance with respect to the smuggling of weapons across the Lebanon-Syria borders. They also called upon all concerned countries to respect the political independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon. In this connection, some members called on Israel to withdraw from northern Ghajar and to stop its routine violations of Lebanese airspace.

49. On 29 November, the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Derek Plumbly, briefed the Council in informal consultations on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, provided an update on operational and security issues concerning the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The Special Coordinator said that fragile calm continued to prevail across the Blue Line. But Lebanon continued to face repeated challenges to its stability and security owing to the Syrian crisis. Recent political assassinations were a chilling reminder of the vulnerability of the country. The Special Coordinator stressed that the recent assassination of General Wissam al-Hassan must be fully and thoroughly investigated and those responsible brought to justice. President Sleiman was engaged in consultations on how to break the political deadlock in the aftermath of the assassination. The national dialogue scheduled for 29 November had been postponed to January 2013.

50. The Special Coordinator added that Israel continued to occupy the northern part of the village of Ghajar, and continued to carry out almost daily violations of Lebanese airspace. There had been continuing violations from the Syrian side as well. UNIFIL continued to work closely with the Lebanese Armed Forces through the strategic dialogue, with a view to increasing the capacity of the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Special Coordinator added that the Lebanese Cabinet had approved a five-year plan of $1.6 billion to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces.

51. The Assistant Secretary-General said that the cessation of hostilities across the Blue Line continued to hold and the situation in the UNIFIL area of operations had remained generally quiet but volatile. The tripartite mechanism and other liaison arrangements continued to serve as important confidence-building measures and to contribute to the prevention of hostility. The Assistant Secretary-General noted that the Lebanese Armed Forces defused two rockets aimed at Israel on 19 November, and UNIFIL had also determined that on 28 November two rockets fired from north of the Litani river towards Israel had landed short, in the UNIFIL area of operations.

52. In the ensuing discussion, the Council members expressed concern at the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon and supported the Baabda Declaration of President Sleiman brokered through the national dialogue. Some Council members also called upon Israel to cease its routine violations of the airspace of Lebanon and to withdraw from the northern part of Ghajar. Some members also criticized the interference of the Syrian Arab Republic in the internal affairs of Lebanon and cross-border attacks into Lebanon. Others called for efforts to stop the smuggling of weapons and fighters from Lebanon into the Syrian Arab Republic.

Iraq

53. On 29 November, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Martin Kobler, briefed the Security Council on the situation in Iraq. He said that UNAMI

remained an important factor in helping the country stay the course and complete its transition to an inclusive, stable and prosperous democracy in the face of a national political stalemate and regional turmoil that had left it vulnerable to extremist violence. He added that notwithstanding the lack of progress between the political leaders of Iraq in resolving their differences, the expectations of Iraq with regard to UNAMI continued to grow. During the reporting period, the Special Representative said Iraq had made committed efforts to enforce law and order following the withdrawal of United States forces in December 2011. Additionally, the country had reclaimed its place at the diplomatic table by successfully hosting the Arab Summit in April and the talks of the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany with the Islamic Republic of Iran in May. Other positive developments included the establishment of the Human Rights Commission and the election of new members to the Board of the Independent High Electoral Commission. The Special Representative added that an agreement to resume official oil exports from the Kurdistan region and progress on a hydrocarbon management framework merited encouragement and support, as they could advance the settling of internal boundaries. Given the continuing challenges with respect to Arab-Kurdish relations, UNAMI had focussed on national reconciliation and regional issues.

54. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General reiterated the appeal of the Secretary-General that Member States offer resettlement opportunities to the former residents of Camp Ashraf.

55. The Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations, Hamid al-Bayati, said that his country had made important progress in establishing the solid foundations of a democratic and federal State, with parties agreeing on the need to resolve the political crisis within a constitutional framework. Yet, he said, despite steady improvement in the security situation, terrorist attacks persisted. He called for a sustainable solution for the Camp Ashraf issue by resettling the camp residents in other countries. He added that there had been positive developments in Iraq's relations with Kuwait, including concrete steps towards settling unresolved issues that relate to the 1990 invasion.

56. In informal consultations following the briefing, the Council members expressed support for UNAMI activities, particularly in the areas of national reconciliation and internal boundaries. They called for the full implementation of Iraq's Chapter VII obligations.

Asia

Timor-Leste

57. On 12 November, the Security Council was briefed by the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Ambassador Baso Sangqu, who led a mini-mission to Timor-Leste from 3 to 6 November. The briefing was followed by a debate on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

58. In his report, the Permanent Representative highlighted the considerable progress made by Timor-Leste since 2006, and said that the Timorese leadership had categorically conveyed that the country should no longer remain on the agenda of the Council and that UNMIT should withdraw by the end of 2012.

59. In the debate that followed, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Finn Reske-Nielsen, said that UNMIT would withdraw by the end of 2012 and that the Joint Transition Plan was being implemented as scheduled. He added that the end of the peacekeeping operation was justified by the successful completion of key benchmarks and a generally positive security situation. With regard to the contours of future United Nations involvement, the Acting Special Representative said that UNMIT was working closely with the Government, first and foremost through the work of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

60. The Timorese Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, José Luis Guterres, highlighted the tremendous progress achieved since the establishment of UNMIT in 2006. Facilitating local ownership and leadership, the Government had moved to end the cyclical problems of the country's past, and to ensure that the Timorese people become an agent of peace and development.

61. The Council members supported the UNMIT drawdown by the end of the year, and encouraged the Government of Timor-Leste to share its experience and continue its contributions in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and to strengthen the country's engagement at the regional level, in particular with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Afghanistan

62. On 26 November, the members of the Security Council had an informal interactive dialogue with the Chairman of the High Peace Council of Afghanistan, Salahuddin Rabbani. The Chairman said that the peace process had reached a point where the prospects for peace were greater than ever, and many among the Taliban had come to realize that political dialogue was the only option. The High Peace Council was working to seize this opportunity and end the conflict through political settlement. The Chairman underlined that for those ready to renounce violence, sever ties with terrorist groups and accept the Afghan Constitution, he, as the Chairman of the High Peace Council, was ready to engage in negotiations regarding a respectful role for them in Afghan society. Since November 2012, the Chairman noted, close to 6,000 ex-combatants had joined the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme, which had helped improve security conditions in some parts of the country. The High Peace Council was also engaged in a comprehensive outreach effort to strengthen national consensus on the peace process and to further results-oriented talks. In order to take the process forward, the Chairman requested the Council to ensure coordination and consultation with the Government of Afghanistan on cases of listing and delisting.

63. In the ensuing discussion, Council members expressed support for the work of the High Peace Council and reiterated their commitment to support the peace process in Afghanistan.

Europe

Bosnia and Herzegovina

64. On 13 November, in a debate on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Valentin Inzko, thanked the

Council members for their readiness to encourage and support efforts to take Bosnia and Herzegovina forward towards the common objective of peace and stability. He stated that, during the reporting period, there had been a marked rise in challenges to the Peace Agreement, in particular to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He added that Bosnia and Herzegovina is in a critical phase, and the international community must express more clearly than ever what is expected of the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina and what will not be tolerated. They must stop their divisive behaviour and start leading the way to the country's full reintegration.

65. The Council members noted that the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina had remained calm and stable. With respect to the current political situation, they supported the full implementation of the Peace Agreement and called upon all political parties and leaders to engage constructively and patiently for nation building. Most of the members opined that, given the lack of progress in the implementation of the five objectives and two conditions, the time was not right for considering the closure of the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. One Council member said that the main task of the international community in the current phase of the Bosnian settlement process is to transfer responsibility for the fate of the country to the Bosnians themselves, and in that respect, favoured the closure of the Office of the High Representative.

66. On 14 November, the Council adopted resolution 2074 (2012) to extend the mandate of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina for another year.

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

67. On 27 November, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Farid Zarif, briefed the Security Council on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). He said that thanks to the political will and courage demonstrated by Belgrade and Pristina, there had been significant progress during two sessions of European Union-facilitated dialogue on 19 October and 7 November. However, given the complexity of the issues that had continued to inhibit progress on both sides, it would be unreasonable to expect solutions to emerge easily or quickly. The Special Representative added that UNMIK was fulfilling its mandate as part of a genuine team that encompassed the Kosovo Force, the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union Special Representative in Kosovo. UNMIK had also continued to monitor the situation affecting minority communities in Kosovo and, wherever possible, was providing good offices for the resolution of disputes and reduction of tensions on the ground.

68. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Ivan Mrkić, said that Serbia was committed to contributing to building peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to developing a platform for a common European future. Rejecting unilateral actions by any party, he said that Serbia continued to promote and pursue the policy of finding peaceful solutions in a constructive dialogue with Pristina. He added that UNMIK should have an important role to complement the European Union-facilitated dialogue, so that an effective exchange of information and reporting to the Security Council could be ensured. Calling for an active role on the ground by

both UNMIK and EULEX, in accordance with their mandates and in a status-neutral way, he stressed that the role of EULEX, especially at this moment, must not be changed. He also expressed concern for security and safety, as well as limited freedom of movement, of the Serbian minority in Kosovo.

69. Enver Hoxhaj termed the decision of the International Steering Group to end the supervised independence of Kosovo as a major milestone that ushered Kosovo in as a fully sovereign nation. He noted that Kosovo was proud of maintaining its multi-ethnic character by protecting, promoting and upholding the principles of multi-ethnicity and secularism.

70. The Council members expressed support for UNMIK activities and European Union-facilitated dialogue. Some members commended the achievements of Kosovo as an independent country. Others reiterated their support for the unity and territorial integrity of Serbia and expressed the belief that UNMIK should remain the main international presence in Kosovo.

Counter-terrorism

71. On 14 November, the Chairs of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) submitted the six-month reports on the work of these Committees. With respect to the 1373 Committee, activities including outreach activities, technical assistance to Member States for capacity-building, and enhanced transparency, among others, were mentioned. The Committee had also focused on enhancing synergies and cooperation among international, regional and subregional organizations and among various counter-terrorism structures.

72. With respect to the 1267/1989 Committee, it was mentioned that the threats from Al-Qaida continued to evolve, and there was an ever more complex variety of networks growing in a number of regions worldwide. The need was therefore to ensure that the Al-Qaida sanctions list remained dynamic and responsive to the changing nature of the threat.

73. With respect to the 1540 Committee, the ongoing effort to raise global awareness of the resolution was highlighted, thereby facilitating assistance to States to allow them to strengthen national capacity to implement its provisions, laying the foundation for improved mechanisms for sharing best practices, and promoting synergy with other international organizations in the effort to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Thematic issues

Illicit cross-border trafficking and movement

74. At its informal consultations on 8 November, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on illicit cross-border trafficking and movement (S/2012/777) in informal consultations. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs said that 20 United Nations agencies and 3 international organizations

(International Criminal Police Organization, World Customs Organization and International Organization for Migration) had come together to prepare the report, which testified to the multifaceted and complex nature of the subject. He emphasized that enforcement alone was not the solution, and a larger approach of integrating the rule of law, development, security and human rights was essential to tackle illicit trafficking. He set out five take-away points from the report: (i) conceptualizing the challenge: a holistic approach looking at supply and demand forces, apart from hardening borders; (ii) comprehensive and integrated action involving social, development, political and law enforcement activities; (iii) the need for greater coordination and cooperation between United Nations agencies and Member States; (iv) strengthening the resource base of United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and underresourced peacekeeping missions; and (v) limitations of countries to take action where organized crime had infiltrated the State apparatus.

75. Welcoming the report, some members saw it as an important first step to bring the issue closer to the work of the Council, and expressed that the Council should work across the United Nations system and seek to pull together related strands of activity wherever possible. Other members emphasized that the existing system of tackling illicit trafficking was adequate and no new system was needed. Some members cautioned against the Council usurping many of the issues, which rightfully should be addressed by the General Assembly.

Piracy (maintenance of international peace and security)

76. On 19 November, the Council held an open debate on the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security: piracy", in which 44 delegations participated and the Council adopted a presidential statement. Presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/783), the Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, said that combating piracy required a multidimensional approach, and what was needed immediately in that regard was better coordination between all actors, stronger capacity to prosecute piracy cases and imprison convicts, and the establishment of a framework governing the use of private security personnel. He said that the United Nations would remain committed to help consolidate international assistance for a comprehensive response.

77. Most speakers said that piracy represented a threat to international peace and security, and all agreed that piracy threatened the economic activities and maritime commerce across the affected regions and beyond. As such, they said, the threat should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Many speakers also underlined the need for assistance to victims of piracy, including those held hostage by the pirates.

78. In its presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/24), the Council stressed the need for a comprehensive response to repress piracy and tackle its underlying causes for a durable eradication of piracy and armed robbery at sea and illegal activities connected therewith. The Council, inter alia, called upon States to cooperate, as appropriate, to secure the early release of hostages, including through the sharing of information and intelligence; took note of the proposals for a hostage support programme developed by the United Nations; noted the adoption by the International Maritime Organization of guidelines to assist in the investigation of the crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships, revised interim guidance to ship owners, ship operators and shipmasters on the use of privately contracted

armed security personnel on board ships in the high risk area, as well as the revised interim recommendations for flag States, port States and coastal States regarding the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the high risk area; and noted the request of some Member States regarding the need to review the boundaries of the High Risk Area on an objective and transparent basis taking into account actual incidents of piracy.

Working methods (Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507))

79. On 26 November, the Security Council held an open debate on its working methods, in which more than 30 delegations participated. Most speakers acknowledged progress towards greater transparency and efficiency in the work of the Security Council, including the improvement in its engagement with other United Nations organs, regional organizations and troop-contributing countries. Some members of the Council said that it was important that the Council not lose sight of its main responsibility: to prevent and resolve conflict. The Council should also pursue greater efficiency, and aim to do more on conflict prevention. Some speakers called for more meaningful engagement between the Council and the wider United Nations membership, and greater transparency in the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council, particularly sanctions Committees. Many speakers noted that there was a lot of room for improving the working methods of the Council. One speaker, while noting that the procedures of the Council should continue to evolve, warned that they should not be subjected to populism.

80. A number of participants advised the Council not to encroach upon the mandates of other United Nations organs. Several speakers noted that given the importance of the work of the Council for the entire international community, its working methods could not be the sole concern of the Council members, let alone the permanent members. Some participants advocated that the Council should agree on a veto restraint regime in situations involving, among other acts, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Others said that the permanent members should exercise restraint in the exercise of the veto in such situations.

81. Several speakers said that in order for the Council to credibly and effectively address the current challenges, a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, including of its working methods and expansion of its membership, was necessary. I this regard, some speakers called for expansion of the membership of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

Non-proliferation

82. On 29 November, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral (Portugal), presented the 90-day report of the Committee to the Council in closed consultations. He said that during the reporting period, the Committee had held one meeting to discuss the recommendations in the final report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009) submitted in May 2012 (S/2012/422). The Committee also continued to perform its duties through informal consultations and the no objection procedure. The Chair added that while affirming that the primary responsibility for implementing the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009) rests with the States, the Committee stood ready to facilitate their implementation.

83. The Council members called for the full implementation of the relevant resolutions by all States, and stressed the need for all concerned not to undertake any action that could adversely impact peace and stability in the Korean peninsula. They also emphasized that the nuclear issue regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be resolved through diplomatic negotiations. Welcoming the midterm report of the Panel of Experts, some members called for the early conclusion of investigations into the reported violations of the sanctions regime contained therein.

Women and peace and security

84. On 30 November, the Security Council held an open debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, in which 61 speakers participated.

85. The Deputy Secretary-General called for recognition of the role of women and their contribution in building a peaceful world. The Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Michelle Bachelet, said that wherever there was conflict, women must be part of the solution. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations said that women remained largely absent from or played symbolic roles in formal peace processes, and noted that a decisive step in removing obstacles to their full participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities should be through active, systematic consultation with local actors and leaders, including women's civil society organizations. The President and founder of Femmes Africa Solidarité, Bineta Diop, said that despite much rhetoric and many commitments, the inclusion of women and gender expertise in designing and fulfilling peace accords was unacceptably low. She called on the international community to engage women's groups more actively in these processes.

86. The participants echoed the view that while some efforts had been made towards the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict situations, much more must be done. They noted the important role that civil society, including women's organizations, can play in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, peacebuilding and post-conflict situations, and encouraged the international community, regional organizations and concerned Member States to promote their active engagement and effective participation in a variety of roles, as appropriate, with a view to implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

Other issues

87. Newly elected members for the term 2013/14 started attending the Council meetings — the Republic of Korea from 1 November and Argentina, Australia, Luxembourg and Rwanda from 20 November.

88. The Council members and newly elected members attended the Finnish workshop on 15 and 16 November.

89. The President represented the Council at the event on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November and delivered a statement that was agreed consensually by the Council members.